

## Message #56 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

### *"The Silver Screen"*

With Randy Smith

(269) 763-2114

### **Preparation Ministries, Inc**

PO BOX 475 OLIVET, MI 49076

[preparationministries@gmail.com](mailto:preparationministries@gmail.com)

*(Please feel free to call, or send messages)*

Web Site: <http://www.preparationministries.net>

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. And thanks for those of you who have responded with requests for materials or with questions. I especially like the questions that come to me. They make me think, and that's good. So, feel free to send in your questions, either by e-mail or regular mail. I'll do my best to answer them. Now, let's go on with today's message.

I'd like to talk to you today about your mind, and what you are doing to protect it. A mind is a precious thing. Without the ability to think, we could not comprehend the existence of God. And if we are unable to comprehend his existence, we certainly could not comprehend the gift of salvation which he has given us. Your mind operates by processing information, and then it sends out messages to your body, telling it to act or speak in a certain way. Now, it may seem like such a simple thing, but, your body is incapable of acting or speaking by itself. Without your thoughts, your body is as good as dead. If you were to go into a coma, your blood may still pump through your veins because your autonomic nervous system keeps your heart pumping blood and your lungs pumping air, but you're still useless. If you can't think, your body cannot act or speak with any degree of intelligence. Sometimes minds cease to function completely, even for involuntary actions. When this happens, medical personnel may attempt to keep the body from deteriorating by using life support measures. But even medical science considers a person to be dead if the mind ceases to operate. They call it, being brain dead.

But what if your mind is functioning, but not functioning properly. What if the thoughts that you think are confused thoughts. What if your thoughts are abnormal? Sometimes people experience

abnormal behavior, such as from an accident or even by birth defects. Sometimes it is brought on by disease, as in the case of Alzheimer's disease. But abnormal patterns of behavior are unacceptable to humans. Generally, whenever we begin to experience abnormal patterns of behavior, we go to our doctors and let them investigate in order to find the cause. That is, if we actually realize that we are experiencing abnormal behavior. Many people suffer mental problems without realizing it, even though others might recognize it very well.

The minds of human beings are responsible for making the decisions which control the actions of the body, and the mind does this by a process of decision making. It makes decisions based on information that it acquires. But, interestingly enough, it is the body that is responsible for supplying this information to the mind. The body supplies this information by its five physical senses, which are, taste, touch, hearing, smell, and sight. What you taste, what you touch, what you hear, what you smell, and what you see is transferred to your mind. Then, your mind examines the information, categorizes it, compares it to other information that is already stored in memory, and then directs the body to either act or speak.

Now, I know that I'm not really telling you anything new, but I'm describing this concept quite specifically because I'm attempting to draw your attention to how the mind directs the body to act or speak. I want you to focus on how the actions or words of a person are determined by how the mind views the information it has been able to gather.

So, just think of this one very simple concept. If the mind gathers good information, it then directs the body to act and speak properly. But if the mind gathers bad information, it then directs the body to act and speak improperly.

God created us. He created us with a mind which would be the storehouse for all our knowledge. He programmed us to think and to use reason in order that we might act and speak appropriately. But we can destroy our ability to act in a reasonable manner. It can happen very easily. All we have to do in order to destroy it is to allow information to enter into our minds which will bring confusion. The mind is an orderly thing. God created us to be intelligent and to act and speak in an orderly manner. But if we allow our minds to be overloaded with information which is contrary to good judgment, then we will corrupt our storehouse of knowledge. The result, quite simply, is corrupt behavior.

A computer is an example of this. A computer stores information. If you've used a computer very much then you realize quite well that the information in a computer must be protected from contamination. Sometimes, if a computer is connected to the internet, a virus can infect the information which is stored in the computer's memory. A computer virus is nothing more than new information which is contrary to the already established information. It is information that does not fit correctly with the other information, and therefore the computer doesn't know how to deal with it in a normal fashion. In a worst case scenario the computer will cease to operate because it doesn't know how to proceed correctly. In simple terms, the computer gets sick.

This is comparable to a human disease which causes the body to act improperly. If the computer is compromised with improper data, the result might be devastating to the memory, and can destroy its ability to operate effectively. If a human's knowledge is corrupted by information that is unreasonable, then this corrupted information can also cause the human mind to cease operation.

Of course, what I am angling toward is the concept of protecting yourself from improper input to your storehouse of knowledge. You do this by controlling how the body provides information to your mind. If your body is allowed to direct its physical senses toward information that is inappropriate to good mental and spiritual health, then it will send that information to your mind and corrupt it. If the body is allowed to see or hear things which are incompatible with normal mental and spiritual reasoning, then the mind will receive those images and sounds and the established storehouse of knowledge will be corrupted.

Many people, including Christians, allow this to happen every day. We are always allowing our eyes or ears to see and hear things which bring confusion to our minds. In many situations we even allow our children's minds to be corrupted by information which we know for certain is contrary to good judgment or good reason. The result is that our children's minds are forced to process information that is overwhelmingly difficult to process, and as a result, many children lose their souls because their minds can no longer recognize that which is reasonable and proper.

Let me take a minute here to present a concept, an example that you might see more clearly. Imagine what your response would be if a stranger came to your door and asked permission to speak to your children about murder, rape, incest, nudity, drugs, sexual immorality, etc? Suppose they told you they would be occasionally using words that used the name of God without honor, and that they also might sit before your children in skimpy attire, and would generally express values and perspectives which oppose the righteousness of God. Yet, they promised you they would not touch your child, or do anything to force his or her attention. Suppose they said that they wanted to come in on a daily basis and just spend some time with your children concerning the above-named subjects. What would be your response? I think I can safely answer that question for you. You would be appalled that anyone would attempt to do such a thing. Your response might even be one of extreme anger or fear, and you would probably slam the door in their face, and then head for the phone to call the police.

But then, parents allow this all the time. But the people who want to talk to your children don't come to your front door, they come into your home through television, movies, the Internet, and even video games. They talk to your children, and show them pictures of things that have no eternal value, and things that God cannot even look upon. It's bad enough that we have to be in this world, but why do we have to bring the world into our homes? A long time ago God dealt with me about what was in my house. He told me that when I come into my house, it should be as my sanctuary, the place where God dwells with me and my family. He told me that I could not escape all things out there in the world, but that in my home I could have a sanctuary unto the Lord. But this is a very difficult concept for Christians today, because they are so afraid to come out from among the people of the world and be separate.

Something God showed me quite some time ago was that Christians make excuses for going after things that stimulate the flesh part of man. One major excuse used by Christians is in quoting scriptures that say we must be in the world, but should not be of the world. They claim that this means we can't possibly separate ourselves to such a great extent. But God has called his chosen ones to be a peculiar people. He has called his people to be a testimony to the things of God. He has called his people to be a light to the world, but his people are so busy entertaining themselves with things of this world, the things that pertain to man's animal nature, that they can no longer comprehend the deep hidden things of God. Because they allow an abundance of anti-Christian thought into their minds, their minds have become corrupted. Just like the computer, they begin to process information in an abnormal way, and the eventual end of them will be just like the computer; they will crash. You cannot continue to input corrupted information day after day after day and still expect the mind to continue to work properly.

But with all this in mind, I don't think this is the real seat of the problem. I think that the very core of evil is the concept that Christians are not willing to put a knife to their throat. What I mean by putting a knife to your throat, is to wage warfare against that part of you that desires to be gluttonous for the things of this world. You actually wage warfare against your flesh in order that your spirit man might prosper. Let me explain what I mean. Let's go to Proverbs 23, and read the first eight verses. This particular passage of scripture may seem difficult to understand, but it is well worth our while to investigate it. Starting with verse one, it reads, "When you sit to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before you: 2 And put a knife to your throat, if you are a man given to appetite. 3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful food. 4 Labor not to be rich: cease from your own wisdom. 5 Will you set your eyes upon that which is not? For wealth certainly makes itself wings; it flies away as an eagle toward heaven. 6 Do not eat the bread of him that has an evil eye, neither desire his dainty foods: 7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, says he to you; but his heart is not with you. 8 The morsel which you have eaten shall you vomit up, and lose your sweet words."

Now, let's go back over these verses with a bit of explanation. I'll read verse one again. It said, "When you sit to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before you:" This verse implies that there are times when you come out of your own environment and partake of things of this world which are considered expensive, dainty, or sumptuous. These verses use the example of food, but the wisdom of Solomon's proverb is intended to express a general concept which pertains to all things, not just rich food. It can pertain to anything in this world which will overstimulate the flesh rather than just provide for fleshly needs. The term ruler, indicates a person of wealth, and therefore indicates someone who is able to set a table which is abundant in delicacies. These verses point to the concept of Satan as the ruler who will offer you his dainty and sumptuous things. Yet, as we see in verse six, Satan's heart is not really for you, although he does offer you all the delicate and expensive things of this world. His real intent is to destroy you, for his heart is evil. As it says in verse seven, "his heart is not with you." Verse three tells us that his dainties are deceitful, in that they will not give proper nutrition to the body as suggested, but will actually be detrimental to it. We can easily see the wisdom in this when we consider that children can be spoiled by giving them too much. However, adults are not exempt from this danger, and Satan

knows this fact very well. It is his intention to spoil adults as well as children by giving them more than is fitting for them.

In these verses the Bible uses food as the example. But it takes little imagination to see the correlation between body and spirit. Just as pizza, pastries and soft drinks can be detrimental to good body health, the dainty and sumptuous things of the world can be detrimental to good spiritual health. If you are a person who can be easily tempted with worldly things, then you need to make a firm resistance from partaking of anything that might be detrimental to your spiritual health. As Solomon puts it, you should put a knife to your throat. This concept applies whether those dainty or sumptuous things are food, or are expensive clothes, classy automobiles, expensive houses, or the glitter of jewelry. Any person who has difficulty maintaining a proper weight, because of ice-cream, pizza, and hamburgers can understand the concept of controlling your intake of these foods. But it also applies to other earthly appetites which will make our fleshly man fat and our spirit man lean.

But it is not just the physical senses of taste, touch, or smell which can provide things which will destroy the body. The physical senses of sight and hearing will also destroy us, for they are the primary ways in which stimulation is transferred from our environment to our minds. And the most destructive element in our society in this current age is the silver screen. Television and movies play the greatest role in supplying the mind with things which are earthly. The temptations of Satan are most easily transferred from the world into our minds by the secular presentations which appear in movies and on television. When we watch the silver screen, it programs us as to what the world view is concerning right and wrong. We are programmed as to how we should dress, how we should eat, in what type of housing we should live, as to what type of automobiles we should drive, and even in what manner we should occupy our spare time.

Yet, this information is not completely accurate when compared to the scripture of the Bible. God has given us guidelines for all these things. The Bible is clear as to the importance of spiritual things, and the unimportance of earthly things. Yet the emphasis of the silver screen does not express Biblical concepts. Those who watch television and movies are being programmed daily. Programs and commercials on television present social standards from the world's perspective, and not from God's perspective. Even the news informs us as to what is important or unimportant in our world. But notice that the news never dwells on the importance of Jesus Christ and his soon coming, but dwells abundantly on wars and rumors of wars. Even the excessive coverage of sports is a dwelling on the concept of warfare, for no sport is played without there being an aggression, one against another.

I am sometimes asked why I don't have a television. I like to give an initial response that I can't afford one. This of course gives me an opportunity to explain that it is not a financial problem, but rather a spiritual problem. I can't afford to have a television because it is too destructive to my soul. It destroys the life in me that was given to me by God. Television and movies are avenues in which information is transferred from the world's social environment to my mind. But I am determined to protect my mind. I don't want any unnecessary information to come into my mind which will not be in concert with the information that God gives me from his word.

It is a simple thing to realize that whatever goes into the mind must be examined and assessed. If you have a very great amount of Godly knowledge, and a small amount of evil knowledge comes into your mind, you generally will have little trouble processing it and weeding out the evil. But what happens when your mind is flooded with evil concepts? The answer is simple. You will soon be overwhelmed, and will break down in complete confusion. Lots of lies cannot be dispelled by just a small amount of truth, but lots of truth will certainly dispel the lies.

The old saying of, “garbage in, garbage out,” still holds true. Television and movies are garbage. They are refuse. They have no eternal value in God's kingdom. They are only vain entertainments. They dwell on the dainty and sumptuous, and even when they have some redeeming value, they are generally used to fill the spaces between commercials. And commercials definitely do dwell on the dainty and sumptuous things of earth.

If you're a person who can see the evilness of television and movies, and can recognize that you are being bombarded with lies and temptations through the medium of the silver screen, then you need to consider whether you can safely endure this daily temptation until your expected end of life. But maybe you have already recognized the evil but have not taken the time to really sit down and examine what your course of action should be. Sometimes we just procrastinate. We put off for one more day the inevitable question, “Is it time to really and honestly begin to come out from among the wicked of the world and become separate?”

Well, isn't that what the Bible tells us to do? Doesn't 2 Corinthians 6:17 say to come out from among them and be separate? How can we, as Christians, continue daily to allow the flow of images into our minds which graphically portray the rudiments of sin. Should we continue to allow into our minds the words of these images, which are so evidently in opposition to the word of God? I don't think so. In fact, I would encourage you to make a decision this very day and begin to separate yourself from the television and movies which so deceitfully destroy the orderliness which God intended your mind to have. Maybe you have already considered this possibility. Maybe you have even tried to give up television and movies before but were drawn back into it. But quitting TV is like quitting smoking. You may try several times before you're successful. But you can quit. Sometimes people do not realize the full extent of the power that Satan has over them in the area of television and movies. People reside in bodies of flesh which delight in being entertained. Television and movies supply the entertainment, and it is difficult to imagine a world without it. But just as smokers or drug addicts can break a bad habit, Christians can break the addiction of television and movies. But it will never happen until you make the decision to do it, and then ask God to help you. Addictions are not overcome by our own strength. It is God who overcomes the power of Satan. But, it is you who must first determine what you want God to do for you.

But please know this. God does not like to see your eyes and ears focused on the concepts of this world, for he knows that the things you see and hear will determine the state of your mind. And a mind that is overwhelmed with concepts of evil will never live a healthy spiritual life.

In closing today, I would like to remind you that God is concerned about where his children put their eyes and ears. He cares what they look at and what they listen to. There's a simple children's song that, as a young boy, I learned in church, and I think it is fitting to leave you with it. Pardon my singing, but please listen to the words, and please take them to heart. Here they are.

Oh, be careful little eyes what you see, be careful little eyes what you see. For your father up above is looking down in love, so be careful little eyes what you see.